Kresge to open Sept, as repairs continue

By Stuart Casnot

Going past the student center, one can’t help but notice the workers atop the infamous Kresge shell — but when will Kresge open again?

Director of the Kresge operation, Bill Dickson from MIT Physical Plant, says that the reconstruction of Kresge is going well. Currently the builders are stripping the lead off the dome, while trying to salvage the remainder of the material.

In order to get to the layer of lead, the constructors needed to strip several top layers. A layer of membrane, insulation, another layer of membrane, and a layer of concrete were removed before the lead was accessible. The lead must be taken off in such a way as to form a concentric circle around the top of the shell. Dickson says that the lead will be removed by the end of the month.

Once the lead is removed, the major repairs can begin. First, the whole shell will be made waterproof, so there will be no additional rotting during the winter. Once that is accomplished, the repairs to structural members will begin, followed by the roofing operation. Because of the nature of the roof and the repairs, all major repairs must start from the bottom and work their way up.

The repairs consist of an assembly of water-proofing membranes with “sleepers,” supported by wood frames, which will be especially resistant to the winter. On top of the sleepers will be a layer of styrofoam insulation, which was not in the original design.

The next step will be to add a layer of marine (waterproof) plywood, which will be covered with building paper. Finally, the whole shell will be blanketed in a standing seam roof.

Contrary to previous estimates, Kresge will not open before September, 1980. There are several reasons for the delay, the chief one being winter. Much reconstruction will have to be curtailed or even halted during the cold weather. In addition, additional measures have to be taken to prevent further damage to the structure by the cold and ice.

Physical Plant has not yet decided whether to attempt the repairs to concrete during the winter months, or to wait until March. If the repairs are done in the winter, the cold will not interfere with the repairs. It is evident that if the repairs proceed through the winter there will be less progress during those months than for most of the spring or summer work. Dickson, however, feels that it would be better to start the repairs during the winter even under adverse conditions, as it is difficult to work during the months when the snow is gone, as the winter is below 69.

The other two statements were picked at random from the complaints and suggestions submitted by the Student Center Library. A year’s worth of complaints are凶手 are used as less than ideal in a similar vein. The fourth statement is a quote made last week by a student at the computer program. The second least a year’s worth of complaints, the Student Center Library is still seemingly plagued with problems in maintaining a reasonable comfort level. As one person put it, quite bluntly, “Twenty-four hours a day, 365 days a year, this place is miserable.”

The head of the Student Center Library, Dr. Sylvia B. McKeehan, refused to comment on the issue. Each written complaint had received a typed letter stating that the library staff had been informed of the problem. The problem is a malfunctioning HVAC system.

Carl Hagger, Chief Engineer of the HVAC system, refused to comment. He was busy on the phone or out of the office.

There is no way to determine the nature of the problem. Smoking and alcohol use are the main causes of the problem. One person put it, quite bluntly, “Twenty-four hours a day, 365 days a year, this place is miserable.”

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Hagger Holst, president of MABFAC, argued that 100 percent unreinforcement is unrealistic. This is valid only when the default rate is under five percent. Between five and nine percent, the federal guarantee is 90 percent. Over nine percent default, the guarantee is 80 percent. Holst cited the present default rate as 4.7 percent.

He also cited “unfriendly delays” in federal reimbursements and “inadequate [federal] appropriations” for operating budgets as two reasons for three-quarters percent fees. But MABFAC does not “think (the arguments) hold water.”

Hagger commented, “But why have a guarantee if you can’t study here?”

By James Moore

“How have you noticed that instead of making things better, we’re getting it colder, or better yet, a freezing system?”

According to Hagger, the Library was programmed into the computers specifically to avoid radical fluctuations in the temperature. “We realized that people could not work in the freezing system,” he said, and that the Library would be available 24 hours a day, and we wanted to ensure that a constant comfort level was maintained. We especially hoped to smooth out any extremes that might occur during summer and autumn ‘transition’ periods, when it can get extremely hot and humid, and unusual warm during the day.”

While the operation of the computer program thus far has been flawless, Hagger does admit that the computers have been mechanical difficulties within the library.

HAGGER: “The circulation fans have a history of malfunctioning,” he said, “and that can make things extremely uncomfortable, especially at night during the winter, when you can’t recirculate the air that is already in the library once an hour, for 15 to 30 minutes every hour. Sometimes, however, the fans replace the heated air with frigid air from outdoors. On a winter night when it’s only 75 degrees inside, and that 10 degrees outside, we try to recirculate the air that is already in the library. One hour.”

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